commence the history of architecture with the comparatively modern remains of Druidical times.

Let us commence, then, with retaining what is beautiful of the Italian, what is grand of the Egyptian, what is picturesque of the Renaissance, and how does the idea of the skilfullest fusion of them affect the mind? Even unite the graceful picturesqueness of Moorish leaf-ornament, and the rough picturesqueness of a Gothic monument, and could any imagination conceive an agreeable combination? In either of these cases would a superior or equal style be educed? or rather, would there not be a hybrid conglomeration, destroying the charm of each? Sicilian and Spanish Saracenic have both been skilfully blended with Norman and Gothic respectively. Yet the architecture thus produced, however its novel effect may charm us, ranks in each case lower than its primary and pure constituents, and is universally allowed to be *theatrical*, in a lowering sense of the word. It is here the same as before; the different qualities of each are deteriorated in combination.

Let us now take an Elizabethan building: here we have much that is allowedly coarse and grotesque: here, might the breeder of styles say, "is a fine opportunity for a cross with the graceful or the beautiful." Let him then put up a Canova in the niche, or replace that grotesque column with its Grecian type, and is he not on the right track to ruin the whole building? It is not prejudice which would affright the admirer of this style, were you to bring the orders of ancient Greece for his use. The building has one distinct quality or character, and his sense of propriety or taste at once tells him that these, though good in themselves, are not good for *his* purpose, but if carried out through the whole building, even retaining the outline, would ruin its charm. We may assert the same as regards two phases of character in the same style. There is a corresponding phase of Italian architecture in Venice, as seen in many parts of the Doge's Palace. I mention Venice more especially, because the Cinque Cento of that city bears more striking features of resemblance to our Elizabethan than the Cinque Cento of Italy generally, having amongst them those many-curved gables so common with us. Now, were you to apply any ordinary string course, niche, moulding, or foliated ornament of the one to the other, they would be mutually out of place; for the character of strong or grotesque picturesqueness in the one, will not amalgamate satisfactorily with the grace, the delicacy, often the weakness of the other.

There is no more difference as regards the expression of form between Grecian, Roman, and Italian architecture, or between Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian, than there is between the expression of form in the Hercules, the gladiator, and the Apollo. Yet who would expect to form a more perfect fourth from the most skilful and artistic combination of the three, blend them as you will; and the many attempts of this nature by various celebrated modern architects, however satisfactory in themselves, all point out the futility of hoping to excel or equal the excellence of each, as they are known to us in their separate characters. It would seem, then, essentially wrong to graft the excellences of one style to the excellences of another in form or ornament; and yet we have many buildings whose size alone would render them grand, and arranged in the grand simplicity of Grecian art, detailed out with the spirit of ancient Rome, of Palladio, and Vignola; nay, often with the weak delicacy of Cinque Cento, and the richness of Gothic. It is but too usual to see the celebrated works of the past the model for our modern buildings; and while the essential original forms are retained, the whole character is deteriorated, if not destroyed, by that studied refinement and variation of detail which our books, our travels, our studies render so easy of obtaining, and which are so ruinous in their effect.

We cannot, I think, be too strongly impressed with the truth, for such to me at least it seems, that works of art are excellent, and delight us in so far as they express a certain quality, and that this delight becomes more strongly impressed as the *singleness* of any quality becomes more strongly impressed, whether it be grandeur, beauty, grace, picturesqueness, grotesqueness, oddness, ornament, fancy, or strength. And it is the perfection of any quality, worked out harmoniously from a variety of forms, all expressive of that quality (the greater the variety or irregularity, the more perfect being the quality), which gives an indestructible value to the works of all times and all nations—to the Egyptian temple, to the Italian palace, to the Gothic spire, to the ornamental work of the Middle Ages, to the Cyclopean as to the Moorish wall; and this is the chief reason which places Michelangelo and Raffaelle, the sculptors of the Apollo and the Venus, the architects of Greece and mediæval Europe, so high in our estimation.

But that compound qualities do and must exist, and that it is by the gradual introduction of these that we fill up the otherwise too startling gaps between strongly antagonistic qualities, and that there can be no stop in any system of created and creatable art, which has all these qualities to be expressed; but that there is or will be one continuous, imperceptibly linked series, infinitely varied, joining agreeably the now antagonistic features of each, does seem to me as certain as the world's motion, as clear as light. And it is for this reason as absurd to anathematise one style to the exaltation of another, to pit Gothic against Grecian, or Roman against Norman, as it would be to declare, that because the yew is picturesque, the elm is worthless; or because the chesnut tree is beautiful, the oak has no charms: each one has its uses.

Moreover, does it appear that works of art, though imperfect in many parts, are yet agreeable, as they hold a consistent character throughout all their parts, and with the pervading quality; whilst a work of art, with all its parts perfect in themselves, but not consistent in character one with another, nor with the pervading quality, is unsatisfactory, inferior, and fundamentally wrong in principle and practice?

The perfections, then, of opposite characters cannot be suddenly blended, for a greater or less degree of deformity would be the result: the progress must be gradual to be agreeable. No art could blend the Farnese Hercules and the Medicean Venus directly; yet indirectly, and by gradual stages, their antagonism is adjusted, and these three qualities of grandeur, beauty, and picturesqueness, in their perfection and transition, may be seen,—in the Olympian Jove, the grand; the Laocoon, the sublimely grand; the Hercules, grandly strong; the Apollo Belvidere, the beautiful, inclining in the Diak Thrower to the beautifully strong, and in the Venus to the graceful. Let Salvator Rosa represent picturesqueness, who in his own productions is at times fanciful, at times sublime; but as many might disagree with me as to the justice of these definitions, I would refer to the whole series of Grecian sculpture, which will show, on investigation, the most wonderful and delicate changes between these different characters, and rather still to living men, and then to animals, where the chain of graduated form is wonderfully shown, as seen at the British Museum.

This antagonism in Architecture, which is the cause of so much foolish party spirit, may be seen reconciled to a degree in Italian and Grecian, early and debased Gothic; but the more startling differences as between Gothic and Grecian, Elizabethan and Byzantine, are yet unreconciled, and it is to this end that modern art tends.

Venice, I think, more than any other city I ever saw, informs us on this matter, and has sufficient transition examples in all styles to prevent their strong difference from being disagreeable: I say disagreeable, for here, as in reasoning, the mind is pleased with *consequent* effects, and avoids sudden and unconnected leaps.

J. B. W.

BRISTOL ARCHITECTURAL SOCIETY.—The annual meeting of this society took place on Thursday evening last, the Rev. H. T. Ellacombe in the chair. The Hon. Secretary, the Rev. E. J. Carter, read the report, noticing the transactions of the society during the past year. The report lamented that the funds of the society had fallen off, but the good work of creating a suitable taste for sacred structures was still going on. A drawing of a proposed new window of stained glass, for Salisbury Cathedral, was exhibited by Mr. Bell.

ROMAN REMAINS AT CIRENCESTER.

No one requires to be told that the site of Corinium-Cester is a great archæological quarry, whence something curious or interesting and illustrative of the ancient occupation of Britain by the Romans is ever and anon turning up. Scarcely a single excavation indeed takes place within the limits of modern Cirencester without disinterring some well-preserved relic. Until now, however, the records of these remains, like the relics themselves, have been very much scattered, but a compendium of the more prominent and interesting discoveries at various times made in that vicinity has just been published,* and from the handsomely got up volume containing the illustrations and details of these, we propose to glean a few particulars of interest to our readers, although, unfortunately, as remarked by the authors of the volume, in a brief chapter on the architecture of Corinium—

"It is to be regretted that no systematic plan of investigation about the places where stone-work has been found has yet been undertaken; so that, although we have fragments of grand work of this description, consisting of portions of capitals of massive columns, friezes, and other architectural details, they are, in general, too incomplete for perfect drawings or descriptions."

On the construction of the walls of Corinium, its fortifications, and its probable importance, we have the following, amongst other remarks, in the outset:—

"In Leland's time, although much of the wall had been destroyed, still, as he tells us that 'a man may yet, walking on the bank of Churne, evidently perceyve the compace of foundation of towers sumtyme standing in the waul,' we are led to conclude that the fortifications of the Roman town must have been on a grand scale.

Much, however, as the wall had then suffered, it has fared still worse in more recent times, as by far the greater part has been removed to form parts of walls of a more modern date; but enough still remains to enable us to make out that Corinium Castrum was fenced by a thick wall, having faced stones without, whilst its inner courses were built of rough irregular stones, firmly cemented together, and imbedded in a mass of concrete.† This structure was probably about fifteen feet high, and from six to eight feet thick, and against it, on the inner side, was thrown up a sloping bank of mixed earth and stones, taken from the enclosed ground: hence the level surface which much of this now presents, as may be observed in the south-east corner of the Camp, enabling the land at that part to be used for very excellent water-meadows.

The wall so constructed was surrounded by a fosse, marked on the eastern side by the present course of the Churn: this stream having been diverted from its ancient and natural channel, which tradition asserts and our observations have confirmed, ran nearly through the centre of the present borough." * * *

"We conclude that the city of Corinium was peculiarly adapted for the centre of a peaceable colony, being itself well defended with strong fortifications—for all old writers lead us to infer that the wall was strengthened by occasional towers—accessible by so many approaches from the distant parts of the island, and also well defended by a chain of fortresses on its only exposed side. Corinium, under these circumstances, would become a capital city, having all the characteristics of a metropolis—warlike preparations, temples, and places of amusement, besides which, the domestic arrangements, utensils, and works of art, may be expected to point it out as a place of luxurious retirement. How far these suppositions are justified, will be determined by the descriptions of the various remains now extant."

Beyond the walls, apparently, the city had an amphitheatre,—

"Which now goes by the name of the 'Bull-ring:' its outline is exceedingly well preserved, although but few vestiges remain of the seats or steps (*gradini*) by which the spectators were usually accommodated. These were doubtless much plainer in Rudder's time, as he remarks, 'I am of opinion that there were originally rows of seats, or steps, one below the other, from top to bottom; but time has much defaced them.' The mounds, for such they are now, with their covering of turf, are twenty feet high, and enclose a space of a broadly oval form, measuring 149 feet from east to west, and 134 feet from north to south: the entrances, which are on a level with the floor of the interior, are 28 feet wide.

* Illustrations of the Remains of Roman Art in Cirencester, the site of Ancient Corinium. By Professor Buckman, F.L.S., F.G.S., &c., and C. H. Newmarch, Esq. London, 1850. Bell, Fleet-street.

† "Concrete, as constantly found at Cirencester, is made up of lime, sand, and gravel, in nearly equal parts." (*)

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